



The Cliffs

Witness the effects of the forces of erosion that have carved and chiseled cliffs in the south banks of the Neuse River. Extending for 600 yards, this spectacular series of cliffs rises 90 feet above the water. Layers of sand, clay, seashells, shale and gravel form the multicolored cliff face, a rainbow of white, tan, yellow and brown.

The cliffs were formed when a fault in the earth's crust shifted millions of years ago. The Neuse River followed this fault line and, over time, cut its course through layers of sediment deposited by shallow seas that had earlier covered the coastal plain. A portion of the river took a bend against its bank and the water's erosive action slowly carved the Cliffs of the Neuse.

Follow the cliffs' edge for lovely views of the river below. A path bordered by a rail fence leads along the riverbank. Oaks, dogwoods and other trees line the path, often cloaking the river in a veil of Spanish moss. Though it took millions of years to form the cliffs, irresponsible actions on the part of man could destroy them in no time. To preserve this beautiful formation and the fossils contained within it, do not climb on or rappel from the cliffs.

History Highlights

Much of the human history of the area centers around the river. The Tuscarora and Saponi Indian tribes once occupied much of the land between the Neuse and Pamlico rivers. What is now the park was a ceremonial ground and a gathering place for hunting expeditions. The river served as an avenue for travel into the surrounding wilderness. Early European settlers set up a trading center at Whitehall (now Seven Springs), the earliest English settlement in the area. After the Revolutionary War, a stagecoach line and river traffic promoted growth of the agricultural town.

Nature's Classroom

Cliffs of the Neuse State Park holds the key to many of nature's best-kept secrets. Unlock the door of nature's classroom and watch the mysteries begin to unfold. Our rangers will guide you on exciting explorations where you'll uncover fascinating surroundings and make great discoveries about the world in which we live. Bring our state's rich natural and cultural heritage alive; embark on a learning adventure and discover the geological treasure of Cliffs of the Neuse State Park.

Interpretive programs take place throughout the year. To obtain a schedule or to arrange a special exploration for your group or class, contact the park office.

The Lake

Recreation activities in the park center on an 11-acre spring-fed lake where a sandy beach, diving platform, roped-off perimeter and bathhouse provide all of the facilities needed for a refreshing swim. For those who prefer to stay on top of the water, there are paddleboats and rowboats for rent. Private boats are not permitted. There is also a refreshment stand. Boating and swimming are available Memorial Day through Labor Day from 10 a.m. to 5:45 p.m., subject to lifeguard availability.



Fishing

The banks of the Neuse River provide scenic spots to fish. The river and its tributaries are home to bluegill, largemouth bass and several species of catfish. In the spring, white and hickory shad migrate through the park, up the river. A state fishing license is required and all regulations of the Wildlife Resources Commission are enforced.

Hiking Trails

Follow park trails to creeks which were once used to make moonshine and cornmeal. Mill Creek was the home of a gristmill which processed grain while federally-operated whiskey stills were located along Still Creek. Four hiking trails are accessible from the parking lot at the museum. Each is less than a mile in length and offers a closer look into the heart of Cliffs of the Neuse State Park.

Museum

An interpretive museum is located at the northern end of the cliffs where creative dioramas and audiovisuals depict the geology and natural history of the area. Adjacent to the museum is an outdoor amphitheater which is often the scene of interpretive programs.



Camping

Family Camping: Set up a tent or trailer on one of thirty-five sites, each with its own picnic table and grill. The family campground at Cliffs of the Neuse is located in a wooded area near the park office. There are no water or electrical hookups but a dump station is provided. Water is available at several locations in the camping area and a washhouse with hot showers and electricity is centrally located. Occupancy is limited to one family or six people per site and a limit of two tents per site. The family campground is open March 15 through November 30.

Group Camping: A portion of the park has been set aside as a primitive camping area for organized groups. Each site has picnic tables, a fire pit and a grill. Drinking water and waterless toilets are located nearby. Reservations are required for use of this site.



Flora & Fauna

Plant Life: A range of habitats contribute to the abundance and variety of flora in the park. River margins, flood plains, rolling uplands and ravines are home to an unusual mixture of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants. More than 420 species of plants have been recorded here. Travel through a pine forest similar to those in the Sandhills region and continue the journey into an adjacent oak/hickory forest, more often associated with the Piedmont. Enjoy a nearby cypress swamp and see cypress and river birch, characteristic of the coastal plain, growing down the slope from galax, red oaks and hickory, more typical of mountain habitats farther west.

The presence of Spanish moss also demonstrates the biological diversity of the park. Though common in the eastern parts of the state, Spanish Moss reaches the western limits of its distribution at Cliffs of the Neuse. Draped in clusters from the limbs of cypress, oak and other trees, it grows in areas along the cliffs and near the river and creeks. Not really a moss but a rootless flowering plant in the pineapple family, Spanish moss obtains nutrients directly from the air.

Animal Life: Like the plant communities, animal life in the park is abundant and diverse. Observe opossums, raccoons, foxes and squirrels in the campground and along hiking trails. Spot river otter and muskrat swimming along the waterways. Reptiles and amphibians are equally at home in the wetland and aquatic habitats. Most of the snakes are non-poisonous. However, copperheads are present and visitors should use caution. Small nocturnal rodents and timid white-tailed deer are also found in the park.

Birds are an easy study in the park as each season of the year finds our feathered friends occupying a variety of habitats. The northern parula nests in clumps of Spanish moss while the prothonotary warbler lives along the river. Fall and winter bring a host of migratory waterfowl to the area to join the native wood duck.

Rules & Regulations

Make your visit a safe and rewarding experience. Our regulations are posted throughout the park for the protection of our visitors and our park. Help preserve our natural resources by observing the following:

❑ Do not climb on or rappel from the cliffs. Help preserve this unique natural resource for others to enjoy.

❑ The removal of any plant, animal, rock or mineral is prohibited.

❑ The park is a wildlife preserve. Hunting or trapping is not permitted. Respect park wildlife; do not feed or frighten the animals.

❑ Place trash in proper receptacles. State law requires aluminum cans be placed in a recycling container.

❑ Fishing is permitted only during park hours. Please conform to the regulations of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.

❑ Firearms and fireworks are not permitted.

❑ The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.

❑ North Carolina motor vehicle and traffic laws apply within the park.

❑ Fires are permitted only in designated areas.

❑ Pets must be kept on a leash no longer than six feet. Pets are not allowed in the bathhouse or swimming area.

❑ Camping is permitted in designated areas by permit only.

❑ As a courtesy to other campers, observe the posted campground quiet hours.

For Your Safety

To prevent accidents, remember the following safety tips.

❑ Do not swim alone. Keep within reach of a friend.

❑ Poisonous snakes, ticks and poison ivy may be encountered along park trails. Exercise caution.

❑ Dress properly. Check with park staff regarding weather and terrain.

Contact park staff for other safety tips or an explanation of park rules.

The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation is a division of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

William G. Ross Jr.
Secretary



Michael F. Easley
Governor

5,000 copies of this public document were printed at a cost of \$609.44 or .12 cents per copy.
5M 4/08

Welcome!

At the turn of the century people flocked to the area. They drank mineral water from local springs to cure their ailments and they took riverboat excursions to the cliffs.

Things have changed since then. Mineral water now comes in plastic bottles, not likely to cure anything at all, and riverboats have given way to more modern modes of transportation.

The cliffs however remain virtually unaltered, standing as a journal of the geological and biological history of the land. See this spectacular formation, now protected within the boundaries of Cliffs of the Neuse State Park.



Information

To learn more about Cliffs of the Neuse State Park, contact:

Cliffs of the Neuse State Park
345-A Park Entrance Road
Seven Springs, N.C. 28578
(919) 778-6234
denr.dpr.cliffs.neuse@lists.ncmail.net
www.ncparks.gov

Discover other North Carolina state parks and recreation areas, contact:

N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation
Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources
1615 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, N.C. 27699-1615
(919) 733-4181

Printed with soy based inks on 100% recycled paper, produced with wind-generated electricity. This publication is recyclable. When you have finished with it, help save our earth by sharing it with a friend, returning it to the park or placing it in an appropriate recycling bin.



Cliffs of the Neuse State Park

Legend

Amphitheater

Bathhouse

Boat Rental

Boundary Line

Concession

Family Camping

Group Camping

Hospital-
Wayne Memorial 736-1110

Hiking Trails

Museum

Parking

Park Office

Picnic Area

Public Telephone

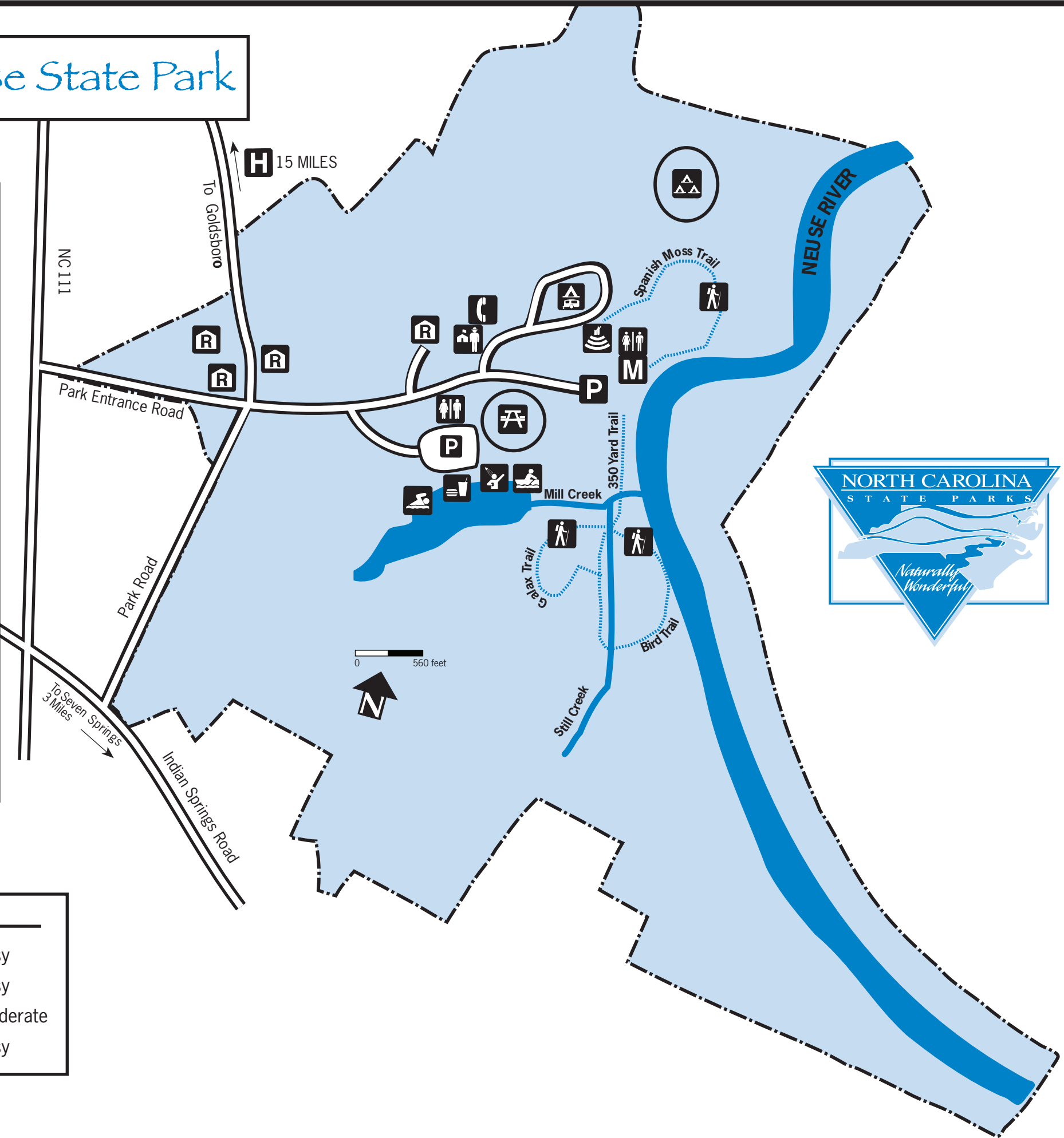
Ranger Residence

Restrooms

Swimming

Trails

Bird Trail	.5 miles	easy
Galax Trail	.5 miles	easy
Spanish Moss Trail	.5 miles	moderate
350Yard Trail	.2 miles	easy



N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation
Department of Environment and Natural Resources



Cliffs of the Neuse State Park

Cliffs of the Neuse State Park



Cliffs of the Neuse State Park is located in Wayne County, 14 miles southeast of Goldsboro on N.C. 111.

Park Hours

November - February	8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
March - May, September & October	8 a.m. - 8 p.m.
June - August	8 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Closed Christmas Day	